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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**2 February 1949****INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 128****SUBJECT: The Change in Government in Paraguay**

The sudden change on 30 January in the Government of Paraguay differs in two respects from recent upsets in El Salvador, Venezuela, and Peru and may therefore raise new considerations in the application of the Bogota Conference resolution regarding the continuity of diplomatic relations. Unlike the previous coups, the use of military power in forcing President Gonzalez to hand over the Government to opposing members of his own Cabinet and political party was indirect rather than open. Moreover, the new regime, in attempting to establish its legality, carefully adhered to the Paraguayan constitution after President Gonzalez' resignation, and has promised a truly democratic election.

Ex-President Gonzalez came into power five months ago following an election in which only his Colorado Party was permitted to vote. Since then, Gonzalez has gradually lost the support of large sections of the army. His position finally became untenable when he was unable to enlist enough army support to offset Paraguay's strong, unified police force which was loyal to his principal opponents, Interior Minister Rodriguez and Education Minister Molas Lopez.

Concerning the role of the army, the anti-Gonzalez group now in power will probably claim that although the army did not support the President, it rightfully obeyed its legal superior, Defense Minister Rolon, and maintained order during a change of government. The new regime will probably also insist that the army did not demand or even influence that change.

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In further claims to legality, the new regime may allege that in order to fill the vacancy caused by Gonzalez' flight to the Brazilian Embassy for refuge, Rolon was named provisional president by the National Assembly. Moreover, half of the members of the former Gonzalez Cabinet have retained their posts. If challenged, the new government could point out that its action was strictly in accordance with the Paraguayan constitution, which provides that a vacancy in the presidential office shall be filled by a provisional president until national elections are held within two months.

These claims to legality and protestations of adherence to democratic principles will not, however, insure the continuance in power of either the present provisional government or its elected successor, neither of which will survive without support of the army and police. There is now no reason to believe that the present Paraguayan Government will be less friendly to the US than the Gonzalez Government.

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